Chapter 103:
THE WHALE

DOOM!!

A FLOWER!?

IT'S A FLOWER!!

A MAN?

NO, IT'S A MAN.

DID HE MEAN TO SAVE US OR WAS HE JUST FISHING?

SWIP...

SWIP

HE GOT THAT NEPTUNIAN SQUID LIKE IT WAS NOTHING!

GULP...!

RMMB

RMMB

DOOM!!

SAY SOME-THING, DARN YOU!!

FWUP

WE'VE GOT A CANNON!!

YOU LOOKING FOR A FIGHT!? WE'LL TAKE YOU ON!

WOOOOO...

...

OH YEAH? WHO WOULD THAT BE?

...!!

FORGET IT. SOME-BODY'S GOING TO DIE.

WOOO

...

LISTEN, YOU!!

WOOOOOOOO...

ME.

READ THIS WAY

ISN'T IT PROPER ETIQUETTE TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF BEFORE YOU START ASKING PEOPLE QUESTIONS?

...

AND WHERE THE HECK ARE WE?

WHO ARE YOU, MISTER?

NOW DON'T GET ALL STEAMED UP.

HE THINKS HE CAN MAKE A FOOL OF ME.

CALM DOWN!

I'M GONNA CHOP HIM UP!!

I'M THE KEEPER OF THE TWIN CAPES LIGHTHOUSE. I'M 71, A GEMINI, AND MY BLOOD TYPE IS AB.

MY NAME IS CROCUS.

SORRY ABOUT THAT.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

...AND ORDER ME AROUND LIKE A BUNCH OF BIG SHOTS! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU ARE, IN THE BELLY OF A MOUSE!?

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHERE THIS IS? HOW DARE YOU INVADE MY PERSONAL RESORT...

YOU MEAN WE CAN GET OUT!?

THE EXIT'S OVER THERE.

DOOM

WHY DOES THE WHALE HAVE AN EXIT IN ITS STOMACH? AND...

WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN TO US?

THEN... THAT WHALE REALLY DID SWALLOW US.

OH!

I DON'T WANT TO BE DIGES-TED.

THEY'RE PAINTED!!

THEY'RE PICTURES PAINTED ON THE INSIDE OF THE WHALE'S STOMACH!

HOLD ON. TAKE A GOOD LOOK AT THE SKY...

...WHY IS THERE A DOOR IN THE SKY?

...AND THE CLOUDS.

THoom!!!

!!?

WHAT WAS THAT !?

FORGET HIM. THERE'S THE EXIT. LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU UP TO!?

IT'S A HOBBY OF MINE.

THEN THIS ISN'T WATER, IT'S STOMACH ACID! IF WE STAY TOO LONG, OUR SHIP'LL DISSOLVE!

LOOK! IT'S NOT AN ISLAND! IT'S A SHIP! AND IT'S MADE OF METAL!

THERE WHO GOES, OLD MAN!? WHAT'S HAPPEN-ING!!?

THERE HE GOES.

WHAT!?

...IS RAMMING THE RED LINE WITH HIS HEAD!!

THIS WHALE ...

THIS WHALE IS SUFFERING!

HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

BWAAAH..

OH YEAH, I SAW THOSE TERRIBLE SCARS!

AND THERE WAS SOMETHING MOURNFUL ABOUT ITS CRIES!

THOOM!!!

BWAH!!

THOOM!!!

AHA! SO THAT'S WHAT THE OLD MAN'S UP TO!!

THOOM!!

LET'S SEE...

WHAT A NASTY WAY TO DO HIM IN!

HE'S GOING TO KILL THE WHALE FROM THE INSIDE!

THOOM!!

WELL, I DON'T WANT TO START UP THE WHALING DEBATE, BUT I FEEL NO OBLIGATION TO SAVE THIS WHALE.

WE'LL LOSE OUR SHIP IF WE STAY TOO LONG.

ONCE WE KNOW THE ANSWER TO THIS MYSTERY, WE'D BETTER GO.

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE.

AAAAAH!!

KA-BAM!!

KLANG

KLANG

KLANG

WHAT'S GOING ON!?

WHAT WAS THAT!?

BWAAAAAAAH

WE HAVE TO FINISH HIM...

WELL, WE'VE MADE IT THIS FAR UNDETECTED, MS. WEDNESDAY.

THE STOMACH IS JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS DOOR. THE OLD MAN IS PROBABLY THERE.

DA-DOOM!!

RIGHT, MR. 9. AND OUR VILLAGE NEEDS THIS ANIMAL DESPERATELY.

...IF WE WANT TO TAKE THIS WHALE!

MYSTERY WOMAN
MS. WEDNESDAY

MYSTERY MAN
MR. 9

SPLAT !!

UGH!!

BONG!!

OOF !!

KLANG!

WHOA! I'M GETTING DIZZY.

KLANG

WHAT!? A DEAD END!?

BONG!

RRMMBB

WHOA! IT'S TILTING!!

HUFF

HUFF

IS IT A SEA? A RIVER? LOOKS LIKE A CANAL.

WHAT NOW?

THOOM

IF WE DON'T GET OUT OF HERE, WE COULD ALL BE KILLED! AND LUFFY, TOO!

I DON'T THINK HE'S HERE IN THE STOMACH. I SAW HIM GET TOSSED OUT OF THE WHALE'S MOUTH!

HEY! WITH ALL THIS SLOSHING GOING ON, WE CAN'T REACH THE EXIT.

GLUB GLUB

WHAT'S HE DOING!?

HE'LL BE DIS-SOLVED!

GLUB...!!

THE OLD MAN JUMPED IN!!

HEY!!

SPLASH!

!

GLUB

GLUB...!!

THOOM!!

OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO ROW! C'MON!

WHOA!

WE'D BETTER GET OUT OF HERE, TOO, BEFORE THE WHALE GETS ANY CRAZIER.

HE'S HEADING FOR THE EXIT.

I CAN'T STOP! I CAN'T STOP! HELP!!

AAAAH !!

!?

TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP TMP

ROGER, MR. 9. LET'S DO IT.

OKAY, MS. WEDNESDAY, WE'LL OPEN IT ON 3-2-1-BABY. BE READY TO FIGHT!

AAAAH !!

AAAAAH !!

I DON'T KNOW, MS. WEDNESDAY!!

WHAT'S THAT, MR. 9!?

KA-BOOM!!!

AAAAAAAAAA...

!

READ THIS WAY

HEY! SO YOU'RE OKAY!

L-LUFFY !?

THEN SAVE ME!

NOOO !!!

THIS ISN'T GOOD, MS. WEDNESDAY. THAT'S A SEA OF STOMACH ACID UNDER US!

KERPLOOSH!!!

...!?
...!!!

FORGET HIM. WE'VE GOT TO SAVE LUFFY.

HEY! THE OLD MAN'S GETTING AWAY!

SPLAP

WHO ARE THOSE STRANGERS WITH LUFFY?

SPUT

SPUT

BLUP BLUP

THOOM

THOOM!!

BWAHH!!!

KA-WHAM!!

STOP IT, LABOON.

THERE ISN'T MUCH TRANQUILIZER LEFT. I'LL HAVE TO MAKE SOME MORE SOON.

STOP HURTING YOURSELF.

...

BWAHH!!

CHUNK!!

WH THROB THROB OOO... BWAA!!

YOU COULDN'T BREAK IT IF YOU POUNDED UNTIL YOUR HEAD TURNED TO MUSH.

THAT ROCK WALL SEPARATES THE WORLD'S SEAS.

LABOON...

WHO ARE YOU GUYS!?

SPLAP

WELL?

THE WHALE'S CALMED DOWN.

I-I KNOW, MS. WEDNESDAY. BUT SURELY THEY'LL UNDERSTAND IF I EXPLAIN THE SITUATION TO THEM.

MR. 9, THESE PEOPLE ARE PIRATES.

WHO'S THE OLD MAN?

HE'S BACK.

...YOU'LL NEVER HARM LABOON!!

DOOM!!

!

AS LONG AS I LIVE ...

HEH HEH HEH...

OH YEAH?

BUT WE'RE ALREADY IN HIS STOM-ACH!

THERE'S NOTHING TO STOP US FROM BLAST-ING A HOLE...

...RIGHT THROUGH HIS INSIDES !!

YOU NO-GOOD BULLIES!

WOOOO

TMP

!!

YOU CAN'T STOP US FROM WHAL-ING!!

THAT OLD MAN TOOK THE BLASTS FOR THE WHALE!

KA-BOOM!!!

CHAK!

YOU CAN'T STOP US! THIS WHALE'S GOING TO BE FOOD FOR OUR VILLAGE!

HA HA HA HA HA HA!! YOUR EFFORTS ARE FOR NOTHING!

THEN WAS HE... PROTECTING THE WHALE!?

GRR!!!

WHAT'S GOING ON!?

?

WHY IS THE OLD MAN...!?

THEY HAD IT COMING!

DOOM!

WH

!!?

AM!

...

THEY'RE THE BIGGEST WHALES IN THE WORLD.

LABOON IS AN ISLAND WHALE, A SPECIES THAT LIVES ONLY IN THE WEST BLUE.

THEY'RE AFTER LABOON'S WHALE MEAT.

THEY COULD FEED THEIR WHOLE VILLAGE FOR TWO OR THREE YEARS ON HIS FLESH.

THOSE CREEPS ARE FROM A NEARBY VILLAGE.

...A FRIENDLY BUNCH OF PIRATES CAME DOWN REVERSE MOUNTAIN. AND BEHIND THEIR SHIP...

ONE DAY, WHEN I WAS A LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER...

...CAME A LITTLE WHALE. IT WAS LABOON.

THERE'S A REASON HE KEEPS POUNDING AGAINST THE RED LINE...

...AND CRYING TOWARD REVERSE MOUNTAIN.

BUT I WON'T LET THEM DO IT!

...BUT FOR LABOON, THOSE PIRATES WERE HIS KIND.

NORMALLY, ISLAND WHALES TRAVEL WITH THEIR KIND IN PODS...

THEIR VOYAGE WAS GOING TO BE FRAUGHT WITH DANGER, SO THEY'D LEFT LABOON BEHIND. OR SO THEY THOUGHT.

THEY'D BEEN SAILING THE WEST BLUE TOGETHER.

THEN, ON THE DAY THEY LEFT, THE CAPTAIN ASKED ME...

...IF I'D TAKE CARE OF LABOON FOR HIM FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS.

THEIR SHIP WAS DAMAGED, SO THEY STAYED AT THE TWIN CAPES FOR SEVERAL MONTHS...

...AND I GOT TO BE GOOD FRIENDS WITH THEM.

SPLASH

BWAAH!

LABOON UNDERSTOOD, SO WE WAITED HERE TOGETHER.

"WE'RE GOING TO CIRCUM-NAVIGATE THE WORLD AND RETURN HERE."

!!

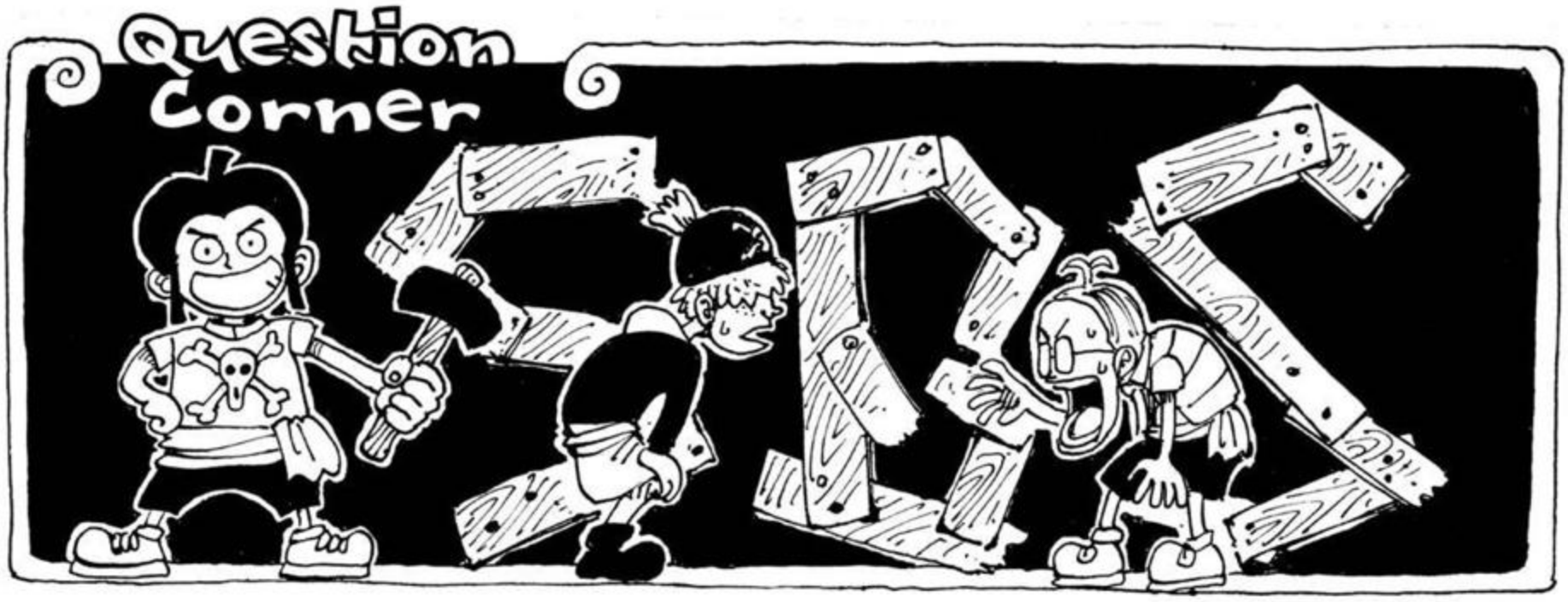
...THAT WAS 50 YEARS AGO.

BUT THEN ...

THAT'S WHY HE KEEPS BANGING AGAINST THE CLIFFS AND CALLING TO THE OTHER SIDE.

BWAAAH

HE STILL THINKS HIS FRIENDS ARE COMING BACK.



Q: How often do you get fan letters? Is it weekly?
If I mailed one on November 1, when would you receive it? Please let me know.

A: In Japan, fan letters go to Shueisha's *Weekly Shonen Jump* Editorial Department. Then, some part-timers sort the mail by author, and my editor brings me my letters each week. So if you're lucky, I might get your letter the day it arrives in the Editorial Department. Normally, I get them within a week or two.

(Outside Japan, the mail will take longer. Readers should send letters to the address below. --Ed.)

Eiichiro Oda/One Piece
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Q: In volume 7, you wrote that you wear the same expression as your characters when you draw them, but is that true when you draw Nami's sexy expressions, too? Do you wear that "Mmm" expression?

A: Why of course. The sexiness of my expressions surpasses even those of the magazine queens--according to the town gossips.

Q: Hey, Ei-chan,* this is the first time I'm writing. (Giggle!) This is embarrassing. I have a question for you. Buggy the Clown comes apart, right? Does that go for all of his parts? Don't draw anything else until you've answered my question!!

A: Yes, that goes for all of his body parts.

(*"Ei" is short for Eiichiro. The reader is being playful here by adding the very informal *"-chan"* after it. --Ed.)